

BGMEA President: Workers will lose jobs if apparel prices not increased

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President of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) Md Siddiqur Rahman on Saturday said RMG workers will lose their jobs if the price of apparel goods is not increased.

“The quality of RMG factories has improved, while their owners have also increased salary of the workers,” he also said at a launching ceremony in Dhaka’s BGMEA Bhaban, “But buyers are not raising the price of apparel goods.”

If things continued like this, he further explained the owners will not be able to cover expenses of running their businesses and will eventually have to cut costs, at the expense of letting their workers go.

Brac University and C&A Foundation had launched a beta version of a digital map containing information on export-oriented RMG factories across Dhaka district.

The map was officially inaugurated by Commerce Minister Tipu Munshi, who was chief guest at the event.

“While everyone talks about problematic factories, nobody writes about 99 factories which are performing well,” said the minister, “Researchers should seek how to strategically increase apparel prices and will not drive buyers away.”

BGMEA president Siddiqur welcomed this initiative, which he said will work towards rebranding the country’s apparel industry.

“We have made tremendous progress in safety and sustainability in recent years,” he added, “We believe the digital map will empower stakeholders across the industry,

including factories, retailers, as well as the government, through establishing a better

understanding about the industry and will help the users with correct and real time information. This will strengthen the effectiveness of improvements already underway.”

Makers of the digital map, titled “Mapped in Bangladesh”, said its aim is to accelerate recent progress in the sector through increased transparency.

It was primarily built by Brac University, with lead funding provided by C&A Foundation.

The map has collected essential primary data on export-oriented factories across Dhaka district and has published it online in an interactive, digital map. Enumerators used a door-to-door approach, visiting each factory to gather the data.

Md Shamsuzzamnan Bhuiyan, inspector general at the Department of Inspection for Factories and Establishments (DIFE), Asif Saleh, senior director of Brac, Mansoor Ahmed, first vice president of Bangladesh Knitwear Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BKMEA), Md Shafiul Islam Mohiuddin, president of the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FBCCI), were also present at the event.